

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of Washington

FILED IN THE
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

Apr 29, 2025

SEAN F. MCAVOY, CLERK

United States of America

v.

PRESTON K. FUNDERBURGH

Case No. 1:25-MJ-04071-ACE

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of December 2024 through April 2025 in the county of Yakima in the
Eastern District of Washington, the defendant(s) violated:*Code Section**Offense Description*

18 U.S.C. § 641

Theft of Government Money

18 U.S.C. § 1343

Wire Fraud

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
Complainant's signature

Shannon Saylor, SA, SSA OIC

Printed name and title☒ Sworn to telephonically and signed electronically☐ Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.Date: 04/29/2025City and state: Yakima, Washington
Judge's signature

ALEXANDER C. EKSTROM, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AUSA: CRP

COUNTY: YAKIMA

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General (SSA OIG) Special Agent Shannon Saylor, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This complaint arises out of an SSA OIG investigation regarding violations of 18 U.S.C. §1343 (Wire Fraud) and 18 U.S.C. §641 (Theft of Government Money).

2. Your Affiant has probable cause to believe that between on or about December 2, 2024, and on or about April 9, 2025, Preston FUNDERBURGH (henceforth “FUNDERBURGH”) (DOB 10/07/1991), violated 18 U.S.C. §1343 (Wire Fraud) and 18 U.S.C. §641 (Theft of Government Money).

3. This affidavit is submitted in support of a complaint against FUNDERBURGH for the above-named violations; said violations all having taken place within the Eastern District of Washington and elsewhere.

AFFIANT’S QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

4. Your Affiant, a Special Agent with the SSA OIG since February 2023, is currently assigned to the Denver-Seattle Field Division, Spokane Office. As part of my official duties, I investigate cases involving the fraud, waste, and abuse of Social Security benefits, as well as identity theft violations involving the

misuse of Social Security Numbers. Prior to my employment with SSA OIG, I was a UnitedStatesPostal Inspector in the Eastern District of Washington for more than sixteen years.

5. I have participated in dozens, if not hundreds, of federal investigations over the course of my lengthy career in federal law enforcement which included, but were not limited to, investigations into wire fraud and/or theft of government money. Likewise, I have been the affiant on dozens, if not hundreds, of federal search warrants. I have training and experience with interviewing victims, subjects, and witnesses regarding the theft, fraud, waste, and abuse of Social Security benefits. Moreover, I have training and experience in successfully analyzing evidence, to include statements, bank records, and other paperwork and evidence customarily gathered in Social Security fraud investigations.

6. As this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause with regard to violations of wire fraud and theft of government money, I have not included all facts known by law enforcement.

APPLICABLE LAW

7. Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 641 (Theft of Government Money), in relevant part, “Whoever embezzles, steals, purloins, or knowingly converts to his use or the use of another, or without lawful authority, sells, conveys, or disposes of any record, voucher, money, or thing of value of the United States or any

department or agency thereof, or any property made or being made under contract for the United States or any department or agency thereof; or, whoever receives, conceals, or retains the same with the intent to convert it to his use or gain, knowing it to have been embezzled, stolen, purloined or converted shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.”

8. Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1349 (Wire Fraud), in relevant part, “Whoever, having devised or intending to devise any scheme or artifice to defraud, or for obtaining money or property by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, transmits or causes to be transmitted by means of wire, radio, or television communication in interstate or foreign commerce, any writings, signs, signals, pictures, or sounds for the purpose of executing such schemes or artifice, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.”

FACTS SUPPORTING PROBABLE CAUSE

9. On or about April 16, 2025, members of the Selah Police Department (SPD), which is within the city of Selah, Washington and within the Eastern District of Washington, responded to a child welfare check. I have both reviewed the SPD reports and gathered relevant documentation from Social Security databases and records. The following information was obtained from those reports, records, and databases.

10. On or about April 16, 2025, SPD Detective N. Singletary was asked to assist with locating a missing four-year-old male (hereinafter “Minor 1”) (DOB: XX/XX/2020).¹ The reporting party (RP) was a non-local friend of Minor 1’s biological grandfather. RP told law enforcement that Minor 1’s grandfather and his grandfather’s wife were concerned about Minor 1 because they had not seen Minor 1 for approximately one year. Minor 1’s grandfather and/or his grandfather’s wife had unsuccessfully attempted to contact Minor 1’s father, FUNDERBURGH, multiple times over the last year in the hope of arranging to see Minor 1. However, FUNDERBURGH would not return calls or text messages. It should be noted that Minor 1’s mother, Amanda Bedard (hereinafter “Bedard”), is deceased as of November 20, 2022. RP indicated there was also concern because Minor 1 has a medical condition manifesting as a “hole in his heart.”

11. Responding officers contacted FUNDERBURGH at 503 Speyers Road, Selah, Washington. This is FUNDERBURGH’s residence. When the officers asked him about Minor 1, FUNDERBURGH said Minor 1 was “fine” and that Minor 1 was staying with FUNDERBURGH’s mother. FUNDERBURGH said his mother is S.F. and that she lives at Cowiche Mill Road, Yakima, Washington.

¹ The names of all minor parties were provided to your Affiant. This information is present in the reports reviewed by your Affiant but has not been included in this affidavit.

FUNDERBURGH said Minor 1 was staying with S.F. because there were bedbugs in FUNDERBURGH's residence.

12. Officers subsequently contacted S.F. by phone. She confirmed Minor 1 was her grandchild, and she said Minor 1 was not living with her. SPD then conducted interviews of other individuals familiar with Minor 1. The officers learned Minor 1 had not been seen since the fall of 2024.

13. On April 17, 2025, FUNDERBURGH, after having been fully advised of his constitutional rights and having waived them, spoke to the officers at SPD. FUNDERBURGH stated in the early morning hours of December 2, 2024, FUNDERBURGH found Minor 1 deceased in his bed. At that time, Minor 1 lived with FUNDERBURGH at 503 Speyers Road, Selah, Washington.

14. FUNDERBURGH explained that when he found Minor 1 deceased, he panicked because he did not want to lose his other children. FUNDERBURGH said he then buried Minor 1. FUNDERBURGH proceeded to direct law enforcement to the area of Cowiche Mills Road, where human remains were recovered.

15. On April 24, 2025, your Affiant queried SSA databases for information on Minor 1's mother. Bedard's date of death had been recorded in the database as November 20, 2022, after SSA had received an electronic death report from the state of Washington. A further review of SSA records showed that

following the death of Bedard, her two children, Minor 1 and Minor 2, began receiving survivor's benefits from the SSA. Moreover, given the children's ages, the agency had appointed a representative payee to both receive and use the monthly benefits for the care of the children. Your Affiant gathered the benefits applications, "Lump Sum Death Payment" applications, and the "Request to be Selected as a Payee" applications for Minor 1 and Minor 2. Based on SSA records, on January 12, 2023, FUNDERBURGH had a telephonic interview with the SSA which initiated the receipt of survivor's benefits for both Minor 1 and Minor 2. FUNDERBURGH's representative payee applications for both minors were subsequently approved.

16. Your Affiant is familiar with the representative payee application FUNDERBURGH completed. The application contains a section where the representative payee confirms both that he or she has had representative payee reporting responsibilities explained to him or her, and that he or she understands them. The application also contains language indicating the representative payee applicant agrees to notify the SSA when a beneficiary dies, leaves the representative payee's custody and/or control, changes living arrangements, or is no longer the representative payee's responsibility.

17. On April 25, 2025, your Affiant contacted an SSA Operations Supervisor (OS) at the SSA Yakima Field Office regarding Minor 1's SSA record.

The OS confirmed that on January 12, 2023, FUNDERBURGH verbally attested the information on all relevant paperwork related to the survivor's benefits of Bedard's children was correct and that FUNDERBURGH understood his reporting responsibilities. The OS told your Affiant that no calls or correspondence was received at the Yakima SSA Field office advising of Minor 1's death.

18. A further review of SSA records show SSA awarded Minor 1 and Minor 2 survivor's benefits on March 10, 2023. Each child received a back payment of \$4,274.50 on or around March 11, 2023. Additionally, in April of 2023 each child began receiving monthly payments of \$1,119.00.

19. When your Affiant queried SSA databases, I determined Minor 1 was born in May 2020 in Yakima, Washington. Minor 1's mother is listed as Amanda M. Bedard and his father is listed as "unknown". Minor 1's address of record with SSA is 503 Speyers Road Selah, Washington. FUNDERBURGH is Minor 1's representative payee and Minor 1 currently receives \$1,119.00 a month in survivor's benefits from SSA that are direct deposited into Bank of America checking account ending in 6912.

20. On April 25, 2025, your Affiant consulted United States Treasury records. Your Affiant was able to observe payments had been made to SSA representative payee FUNDERBURGH on behalf of Minor 1 in December 2024, January 2025, February 2025, March 2025, and April 2025. These payments had

been processed and direct deposited into Bank of America checking account ending in 6912 from December 2024 through April 2025.

21. Your Affiant knows from training and experience that SSA Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments that are made to beneficiaries have a particular wire path flow.

22. The December 2024, January 2025, February 2025, March 2025, and April 2025 payments of survivor's benefits paid from SSA for the benefit of Minor 1 into Bank of American account ending in 6912 were dispersed by transmitted writings, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds by means of wire in interstate commerce. Each monthly payment file originated from SSA in Baltimore, Maryland. The payment file was then transmitted to the United States Treasury in Boulder, Colorado. From there, the payment file went to Treasury Payment Operations which is also in Kansas City, Missouri. The payment file then went to the Federal Reserve Bank in East Rutherford, New Jersey, where it was finally transmitted to Bank of America account ending in 6912.

CONCLUSION

23. Based on all the above information, your Affiant asserts there is probable cause to believe that on or about December 2024 and continuing through on or about April 2025, Preston Keith FUNDERBURGH committed violations of

18 U.S.C. § 641 (Theft of Government Money) and 18 U.S.C. § 1343 (Wire Fraud).

Your Affiant declares under penalty of perjury that the statements above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon K. Saylor, Special Agent
Social Security Administration (SSA)
Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

Sworn to telephonically and signed electronically this 29th day of April 2025.



Honorable Alexander C. Ekstrom
United States Magistrate Judge

